



State of Illinois
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Illinois Department of Transportation
Omer Osman, Acting Secretary

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IDOT wins America's Transportation Awards grand prize

Metro East project brings top transportation prize to Illinois for second year in a row

COLLINSVILLE –The Illinois Department of Transportation announced that a joint effort with Missouri to improve mobility and access throughout the Metro East region has earned the Grand Prize in the 2019 America's Transportation Awards, the top honor for state departments of transportation. The award marks the second consecutive year IDOT has won the honor, presented at the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials annual meeting in St. Louis.

"While we are happy to bring home this award once again, we are even more proud of the work we do every day on behalf of Illinois," said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. "These are more than just projects to us, but ways to make our communities even better places to build a career, grow a business and raise a family."

The [partnership](#) between Illinois and Missouri produced several bridge projects over the past decade to improve connections to jobs and tourist destinations in the metropolitan area.

The nomination, selected from a field of 81 nominations from 39 states, also was in the running for the People's Choice Award determined by online voting. The project received 12,443 votes, the sixth-highest total in the contest.

"All of these projects demonstrate the many ways transportation improves the quality of people's lives," said Jim Tymon, AASHTO's executive director. "Some of these projects increased mobility by giving commuters more travel options, including biking and walking. Others spurred economic development, cut traffic congestion or improved safety. And while we honor today's champions, the biggest winners are by far the American people."

IDOT will be donating its \$5,000 share of the prize to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville's Upward Bound program. The program provides educational opportunities for middle and high school students in East St. Louis, Cahokia, SIUE East St. Louis Charter, Brooklyn and Madison, with a focus on encouraging low-income, first-generation college students to seek post-secondary education. Upward Bound and IDOT have long partnered to teach kids about engineering careers.

In last year's America's Transportation Awards, the Interstate 55-Lake Shore Drive interchange in Chicago took home the Grand Prize, a first for IDOT.